



File Code: 2230-3/2210

Date: May 14, 2009

Scott Slaugh  
4012 South, 2500 East  
Vernal, UT 84078

Dear Permittee,

This letter is in reference to the annual meeting Scott Slaugh, Brian Tinker, Glen Tinker, and Aaron Zobell had on April 6, 2009, in Manila concerning grazing on the Sheep Creek Mountain Allotment. This letter was written as a follow-up to this meeting, will serve as your 2009 Annual Operating Instructions (AOI), and will become part of your permit as provided for in Part 1, Item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a) of your term grazing permit.

Please note situations may develop during the grazing season which you feel may require changes to these instructions. If you believe this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact Aaron Zobell and obtain approval before initiating changes or deviating from these instructions. Sheep Creek Mountain permittee 2009 operating instructions are as follows:

**Sheep Creek Mountain Allotment Dates and Numbers**

Permittee	Numbers	Non-Use	Season of Use
John Tinker Family Living Trust	145	0	June 1 – Sept. 15
Scott Slaugh	28	0	June 1 – Sept. 15

Unit	Sequence	Dates of Use	Allowable Use
Death Valley	1 <sup>st</sup>	June 1 – June 21	40%
Scraper Springs	2 <sup>nd</sup>	June 22 – July 21	50%
Lost Springs	3 <sup>rd</sup>	July 22 – August 6	50%
Elk Park	4 <sup>th</sup>	August 7 – Sept. 15	50%

Only livestock branded according to the Certificate of Brand Registrations provided to the Forest Service by each permittee will be allowed to graze on the allotment. Confirmation of payment through the “lock box” process must be received before livestock will be allowed to graze on National Forest lands.

Scott plans to truck his cattle which will have green ear tags to the Yellow Pine area in Death Valley and then to immediately start grazing this unit. The John Tinker Family Living Trust plans to truck two loads of cattle (~90-100) which will have yellow ear tags to the Lodgepole Trough area in Death Valley and then to immediately start grazing this unit.

Forage utilization should not exceed 40% in Death Valley or 50% elsewhere on the allotment.



Once proper use has been reached in Death Valley, it will be time to move your cattle in the Scrapper Springs unit. Once proper use has been reached in the Scrapper Springs unit it will be time to move your cattle into the Lost Springs unit. Once proper use has been met in the Lost Springs unit it will be time to move your cattle into the Elk Park unit. Once 50% utilization is reached in the Elk Park unit it will be time to come home. While in any unit, it is important that an even distribution of your cattle be maintained since any area reaching the proper utilization level means it is time to move into the next scheduled unit or if it is the last unit to be grazed to remove your cattle from National Forest lands. The schedule and utilization levels listed above are per the 1995 Vegetation/Habitat Management Plan for the Sheep Creek Mountain Allotment. Any changes to this schedule must be coordinated in advance with Aaron. Every effort must be taken to completely remove cattle off the National Forest by the scheduled off date. If it requires three days of riding to gather your cattle, then you should start riding three days prior to your scheduled off date.

Equal utilization of the range is the objective. This requires riding and salting be properly conducted throughout the entire grazing season. Rotate your salting areas during the grazing season and from year to year. Place your salt in good forage producing areas where cattle do not go by preference. Do not place your salt next to water, roads, trails, or in open meadows. Cattle need to be kept in their appropriate units, properly distributed within those units, and moved from unit to unit as needed. It is especially important that cattle be kept in the unit they are supposed to be in and that an even distribution of your cattle be maintained while in a unit, since any area reaching proper utilization means it is time to move into the next unit or to come home. Each permittee is responsible for keeping cattle spread out and not over utilizing the range.

Extra emphasis should be placed on meeting utilization standards within the riparian areas of the Lost Spring and Scrapper Springs units especially within the Honslinger, Carter Creek (below the Browne Lake exclosure), Scrapper Springs, and Spring Creek areas. Remove your cattle from the unit and place them into the next unit if 50% utilization is met in these areas before the proposed off dates for these units. Meeting end of season utilization standards will require complete removal of cattle from each unit by the scheduled off date for that unit and follow up to ensure cattle do not return to a unit after being previously removed from that unit.

In 2006, we agreed that we would make two changes to the Sheep Creek Mountain grazing schedule to reduce grazing pressure within riparian areas of Honslinger Creek and Carter Creek, below the Browne Lake exclosure. The first change includes a four-day reduction in grazing use within the Lost Springs unit, with a corresponding four day increase of grazing in the Elk Park unit. The second change is a modification of the deferred rotation schedule in the Scrapper Springs and Lost Springs units. This change defers the Lost Springs unit two out of three years and the Scrapper Springs unit once every three years. This grazing season the Scrapper Springs unit will be grazed first and the Lost Springs unit will be deferred. I anticipate the Scrapper Springs unit will again be grazed first and the Lost Springs unit will be grazed second in the 2010 grazing season. We will cooperatively continue to evaluate the effects of these changes at the end of this grazing season to determine if these changes should be permanently implemented into the Sheep Creek Mountain Allotment grazing schedule.

Maintenance of all your improvements must be done one week before cattle enter the allotment and maintenance needs to be completed to the standards listed in your permit. Completing your

maintenance responsibilities one week before your on date will allow Aaron time to inspect your improvements and address any concerns before your cattle enter the allotment. You are responsible to provide all materials and labor needed to complete this maintenance. Any ATV use in the administration of your allotment is limited to existing roads. ATV use along existing fences to maintain them where this use has previously occurred has been approved via permittees completed Travel Variance Request. Off-road use of ATVs for any other purpose such as cross-country travel is still prohibited. Maintenance responsibilities that were specifically discussed include the following:

❖ John Tinker Family Living Trust

- Dowd Hole Trough: The trough and associated water development needs to be maintained to the standards listed in the John Tinker Family Living Trust permit. At the very least, the overflow needs to be working properly and the area around the trough needs to be rehabbed. This needs to be completed before John Tinker Family Living Trust cattle will be allowed on the allotment.

Other items that were discussed are as follows:

❖ Scrapper Springs Unit: Height-Weight utilization of key species (Timothy, and Kentucky bluegrass) at Scrapper Springs did not exceed utilization standards last grazing season with 36% and 42% utilization being measured respectively. However, this area of the Scrapper Springs remains a concern as cattle continue to highly prefer this area of the unit over other areas. This concern is amplified as cattle are scheduled to be in this unit 30 days this grazing season compared to 19 days last grazing season. The following management strategies will continue to be implemented to ensure utilization standards are met in this unit:

- An electric fence will be put around the spring, adjacent willows, and old pond within Scrapper Springs prior to cattle entering the Scrapper Springs unit. This electric fence should be three-strand. It will be the John Tinker's Family Living Trust's responsibility to ensure this electric fence is installed and working before cattle enter the Scrapper Springs unit. Forest Service can provide the wire needed to install the electric fence if needed. The John Tinker Family Living Trust will need to remove the electric fence after cattle have been removed from the unit.
- Herding every two to three days: Permittee herding of cattle while within the Scrapper Springs unit should occur at least every two to three days. I expect permittees will be able to maintain an overall better distribution with their cattle in this unit by herding cattle earlier in the grazing season and more often. Generally speaking herding later in the day appears to be more effective than herding first thing in the morning.
- No salting adjacent or within at least ¼ mile of Scrapper Springs.
- Dowd Mountain Ponds: Permittees will meet in the field with Aaron early this grazing season to discuss the possibility of putting in one to several ponds within the Dowd Hole area in an effort to improve distribution of cattle in the Scrapper Springs unit. Plans will be put in place to develop a pond(s) in the near future should a suitable location(s) be found.
- Permittees will contact Aaron Zobell and livestock will be moved early into the

Lost Springs unit should utilization standards be met at Scrapper Springs before the proposed date to move cattle into the Lost Springs unit. If this occurs, days that were lost in the Scrapper Springs unit may be made up in either the Lost Springs or Elk Park units if this does not result in utilization standards in either unit being exceeded.

- ❖ **Lost Spring Unit:** Height-Weight utilization of key species and residual stubble heights along Honslinger initially showed moderate use levels of key species (35%) with a residual stubble height exceeding five inches. However, livestock trailing back into the unit via the Deep Creek road resulted in continued use of this unit until livestock were removed from the unit. As a result, utilization levels on key species increased to approximately 47% and the residual stubble height reduced to just over four inches. Fortunately, this is still within utilization standards. However, livestock continually returning to this area after they have been cleaned out of this unit remains a concern as do utilization levels. As a result I expect the strategies initially implemented in 2007 and continued into the 2008 grazing season to continue to be implemented. These strategies are shown below. In addition and as discussed in the meeting I expect the permittees to work with Aaron in finding a way (e.g. fencing or other means) to preferably eliminate, but at the very least, reduce the number of livestock that are returning to this unit after livestock are initially removed from the unit.
  - Herding by permittees: I expect herding by permittees to occur at least every two to three days. Generally speaking herding later in the day appears to be more effective than herding first thing in the morning. Please pay particular attention to the Honslinger drainage and other riparian areas in this unit. Cattle will be removed from the Lost Springs unit when the Honslinger area reaches 50% use regardless of the proposed date to move cattle from this unit.
  - Electric fence around Hope Creek adjacent to Sheep Creek Geological Loop: An electric fence will be put up in the areas prior to cattle entering the Lost Springs unit. The electric fence should be three-strand. The Forest Service can provide the wire for this fence if needed. It will be Scott Slaugh's responsibility to see this fence is installed and working before cattle enter the Lost Springs unit.
  - Cattle should not come into this unit before their on date and cattle need to be removed from this unit when 50% utilization is reached.
  - This unit should be checked regularly after cattle have been removed from the unit to see if cattle have drifted back into the unit. I expect permittees will promptly remove these cattle from the unit if cattle have drifted back into the unit. This should occur until a way is found to prevent cattle from drifting back into this unit after cattle have been removed.
- ❖ **Salting:** Please become familiar with the salting standards listed in your permit. I expect all permittees to follow these standards. A violation of this standard will result in a letter of non-compliance and if done again will result in permit action.

Permittees had questions about the following:

- ❖ **Youngs Spring Area:** The Youngs Spring area may continue to be grazed in conjunction

with the Lost Springs unit. When either utilization for the Young's Spring area or the Lost Springs unit reaches 50 percent, it will be time to move your livestock into the Elk Park portion of the Elk Park unit that should not have been previously grazed this year. I expect livestock will not return to Young's Spring area once they have been moved into the rest of the Elk Park unit.

- ❖ Corrals at Frog Ponds: I do not feel there is a need to establish permanent facilities at Frog Ponds. However, if permittees feel the Summit Springs pasture is no longer a suitable area for gathering cattle at the end of the grazing season, then permittees will need to work with Aaron in developing a site where permittees may put temporary corrals. This site may include Frog Ponds.
- ❖ NEPA Sufficiency: The Sheep Creek Park Allotment is currently under an evaluation to determine its NEPA sufficiency. I anticipate we will update your permit and allotment management plan should the allotment be found NEPA sufficient.

Please keep track of the dates, numbers and any other facts that may be pertinent to your grazing on the allotment this year and let Aaron know as they occur. Note these items on the Grazing Use Record form attached below and return them to Aaron by the 31<sup>st</sup> of December.

We also need your help to control noxious weeds. By removing musk thistle seed heads before they flower and then cutting down the plant at its base, the spread of this plant can be controlled. We are especially concerned about Dyer's Woad and any other "new" weeds. Please let Aaron know of any new noxious weed infestations so we can keep them from becoming established.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Aaron Zobell at (435) 781-5279. Thanks for your help in managing this allotment. We look forward to a great year.

Sincerely,

ROWDY MUIR  
Acting District Ranger

Enclosures (1)  
Grazing Use Record

**2009 GRAZING USE RECORD**  
**FLAMING GORGE RANGER DISTRICT**

This form should be completed in detail, signed, and returned immediately following the grazing season to this office. Use back of sheet if necessary.

PERMITTEE \_\_\_\_\_

ALLOTMENT \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

ACTUAL USE

UNIT IN ORDER GRAZED	TOTAL LIVESTOCK NUMBERS	DATE ENTERED	DATE LEFT	DATE <u>ALL</u> LIVESTOCK REMOVED FROM UNIT	NOTES

NOXIOUS WEEDS

SPECIES	LOCATION	OTHER

OTHER

Improvements maintained and/or visited

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Improvements in need of repair

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SIGNATURE

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DATE